Mette Skovgaard Andersen*

Metaphor matters

Abstract

The present article is intended as a contribution to the discussion of one of the most neg-lected themes in metaphor-research, i.e. the translation of metaphors in LSP-texts. It reports a pair of corpus space analyses, which were conducted as part of my Ph.D.-the-sis about translators' metaphor-competence. The article takes as its starting-point the notion of context-dependent identification criteria in abstract themes such as business cycles and ends with the suggestion that we as researchers of translation should perhaps approach the problem from a more cotext-oriented point of view.

1. Introduction

The following article is a report from my Ph.D.-thesis about the trans-lation of metaphors in LSP texts, more specifically in texts about busi-ness cycles in German and Danish. The overall hypothesis of my thesis is that translators lack knowledge about metaphors both as linguistic, pragmatic and cognitive phenomena and consequently they have to base their translations more or less on intuition or on what Hönig (Hönig 1995: 50) calls micro-strategies. Hönig (ibid.: 59) describes these micro-strategies as "verabsolutiert", that is, translation-rules hav-ing "unbeschränkte Gültigkeit" (ibid.: 50). Obviously, translations based on such strategies are insufficient. Though they sometimes may lead to even brilliant translations they lack a basis – a macro-strategy – to which translators can refer and according to which translators can ex-plain and perhaps legitimise their solutions. Everybody who is just slightly familiar with the kind of problems a translator has to face when translating knows how important a macro-strategy is, not only for the translation-product and the translation-process but also for the transla-

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*   *Mette Skovgaard Andersen*
     Institut for Tysk
     Handelshøjskolen i København
     Dalgas Have 15
     DK-2000 Frederiksberg

tor himself[1] and his entire profession. Just as a mechanic has to know what caused a certain functional disorder, and why he replaces one instrument instead of another, the translator has to know why he translates something as he does. This, however, requires extensive knowledge and a number of competences. I have elsewhere (Andersen 1999: 87) divided these competences into ordinary translation-competence and so-called metaphor-competence. By metaphor-competence I actually refer to a whole range of competences including translation-competence with regard to metaphors. The competence that the translator should ideally have in the first place to be able to understand a linguistic metaphor and in the second place to translate it according to a macro-strategy includes for instance extensive knowledge about the metaphor as a linguistic sign. By this I refer to the linguistic manifestation of the metaphor, its identification and interpretation, its differences and similarities with other linguistic signs etc. Metaphor-competence also includes pragmatic knowledge, that is, knowledge about the functions of metaphors and cognitive knowledge referring to the potential effects of the metaphorical predication. One very important aspect of metaphor-competence is the translator's knowledge about what metaphors can be found in the texts in question. In this article I will try to specify this particular part of pragmatic and cognitive knowledge, which is required of the translator to be able to translate metaphors in economic texts according to a macro-strategy.

For a very long time the problem of translating metaphors has been largely neglected by researchers of translation, especially I would claim by researchers in LSP-translation-theory. In 1988 Snell-Hornby described the general research-situation with the well-known and often quoted lines: "Scholars agree that metaphor has been sadly neglected in translation theory" (Snell-Hornby 1988: 55). Eight years later, Kurth speaks of "sträflicher Vernachlässigung seitens der Übersetzungswissenschaft" (Kurth 1995: 10). This neglect is however understandable if you take a close look at the problems being discussed in metaphor-research. Not knowing if a metaphor is a linguistic and/or a mental phenomenon and not being able to identify *the* metaphor, how should we be able to make a theory for translating it? And by the way – what are we

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[1] When reference is made to the translator for the sake of convenience I use the masculine form.

translating? Should we find the underlying metaphorical concepts in the source-text to be translated and translate these into equivalent metaphorical concepts of the target-text, as the cognitive theory seems to claim? Are we really capable of doing this as translators? Or should we start by finding the metaphorical linguistic items in the source-text and if possible translate these into similar linguistic items, i.e. translate a verbal metaphor in the source-text into another verbal metaphor in the target-text with approximately the same meaning/connotations? Or does the linguistic manifestation not matter at all? Is it only the underlying ideas, the connotations, which should be taken into account?

The fact is that nobody has really tried to answer these questions seriously. Because of the present themes discussed in metaphor-research, translation theory almost seems to have refrained from discussing the theme, at least in relation to the translation of metaphors in LSP-texts. In fact, metaphor-research is still struggling with so fundamental problems that such an attitude almost seems relevant. On the other hand, every day the translator is confronted with all kinds of metaphorical expressions and every time he somehow has to make decisions about how to solve the problem of translating metaphors. Thus, I will argue that, instead of waiting for metaphor-researchers to solve the problem of metaphors we – as translation researchers and practicians – should work according to the device: the more we know about the linguistic manifestations in different texttypes the better. Further, our investigations should be guided by one very fundamental insight, namely that a metaphor is both a linguistic and a mental phenomenon, but the translator <u>has</u> to take his own starting-point in the linguistic manifestations, which is the very core of the problem. What metaphors should be studied, what metaphors matter? Only the non-conventional ones, the ones not being part of our daily talk? Only the conventional ones as for instance Lakoff and Johnson (Lakoff/Johnson 1980) claim, because they structure our knowledge and understanding of the theme in question? Or perhaps both?

My fundamental claim in this article is that both types and all of the intermediate types between the poles separating conventional and non-conventional metaphors matter, and I will try to show this by reporting data from two different corpus-analyses, which I have conducted. The first one, in section 3, approaches the analysis top-down and uses context-dependent criteria in order to identify the metaphors, and the se-

cond one, in section 4, approaches the analysis bottom-up by taking specific terms as its starting-point. Before turning to these analyses, I would like to ask a rhetorical question: Could it be that the reason why everybody talks about metaphorical concepts is that nobody is really able to identify the linguistic metaphor? This is indeed a fact one has to face when trying to investigate the translation of linguistic metaphors empirically. Translation theory often claims that the most important issue when translating a text is to know how to achieve the same effect in the target text as originally meant in the source text (see for instance Gile 1995: 93). This however implies that the translator must be in a position to estimate the effect of the source text before translating it. It also implies that the translator is able to estimate the potential function and effect of the metaphors in the first place in the source-text. But before doing all this, the translator has to find a way out of the definitional jungle and find some operational criteria for the definition of a linguistic metaphor. The issue of identifying linguistic metaphors has been discussed since Aristotle, but there seems to have been only little progress made. For the time being the new 'mantra' seems to be the notion of 'context-dependent criteria' (Cameron 1999: 27), which I will discuss in the following part.

2.   The notion of context-dependent criteria

The basic idea in this notion is actually as old as the Aristotelian definition, namely that linguistic metaphors should somehow be different from what should be expected, and that this difference would be sufficient to identify a linguistic expression as a metaphor. While the expectations in the Aristotelian days were set by the cotext, more specifically the sentence, and the linguistic metaphor was viewed as a semantic anomaly or absurdity on the sentence-level, the idea that each word belongs in one particular place and has only one meaning has now been left. Instead it is generally accepted that the whole context has a great impact not only on the identification but also on the interpretation of linguistic metaphors. But it is still not quite clear exactly how to define context. How large or how small can the context be? Weinrich, one of the researchers having used the notion of context with respect to metaphors, defined a metaphor as a word in a counter-determinating context (Weinrich 1976: 320) and he meant for instance that a single word could be enough for the identification of a linguistic metaphor. Others

seem to think that much more is required (see below). The notion of context-dependent identification criteria will be discussed in the following with respect to my empirical material and the translational perspective.

My corpus consists of one volume of a German and of a Danish economic magazine. From this I selected all the articles, which explicitly had 'business cycles' as their theme.[2] This theme was chosen because of the following epistemological assumption: Assuming that the cognitive theory is right the only way we can conceptualise and understand a new thing or phenomenon is by comparing and relating the new one to an already known one. This is done by the receiver's mapping his experiences of the old phenomenon onto his experiences of the new phenomenon. According to the cognitive theory put forward by among others Lakoff and Johnson such so-called mapping is unidirectional and partial. Thus, metaphors in this cognitive view are basically understood as a categorisation tool and therefore not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a mental one. Economics and therefore also business cycles are fundamentally an abstraction and metaphors would par excellence dominate the whole field of the abstraction. But seen in relation to my corpus what does all this imply when we talk about the necessity of context-dependent criteria? First of all it implies a definition of context.

2.1. What is the context for articles about business cycles?

The well-known distinction between context and cotext, the former referring to the whole communication-situation and the latter referring to the linguistic surroundings is still useful. To determine the context for my corpus the whole complex of the communication situation must be determined. Lasswell (Nord in Snell-Hornby et al. 1998: 58) put this whole complex in a comprehensive formula with his well-known wh-questions.[3] The 'how-question' belonging mostly to the cotext-area and the rest of the questions to the context-area. As for the context the communicative partners in the texts in question are assumed to be rather similar. Of course two different cultures with their different historical and social development will never be totally comparable. But the only

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2   This was established by the headline of the articles. In German the headline was 'Konjunktur' and in Danish the headline was 'konjunktur'.

3   "Wer sagt was zu wem wann wo wie und zu welchem Zweck?"

way a translator belonging to one of the cultures can handle the difficult situation where he has to take the cultural and social differences into account is by comparing similarities and dissimilarities. The communication situations in the German and the Danish articles must be said to be rather similar although the magazines in which they are printed are not totally identical. The Danish magazine *'Børsens Nyhedsmagasin'* is not as lengthy as the German *'Wirtschaftswoche'*. But generally the communication situations are comparable: An economic journalist who probably has some theoretical knowledge about economics on the one hand informs the magazine-readers of economics, more specifically of business cycles on the other. The readers of the magazine presumably have little or limited knowledge about theoretical economics and therefore the journalist will have to make the theme of business cycles more comprehensible by transforming the theoretical language into more concrete language supposedly more familiar and understandable to average readers. The communication could be described as a semi-expert communicating to non-experts and semi-experts respectively. The medium is as already mentioned an economic magazine and the articles could be described as LSP-texts. Of course it could be claimed that the language of the articles should be described as journalistic more than language for specific purpose. I have based my view on Hoffmann who defines LSP as

> "(...) die Gesamtheit aller sprachlichen Mittel, die in einem fachlich begrenzbaren Kommunikationsbereich verwendet werden, um die Verständigung zwischen den in diesem Bereich tätigen Menschen zu gewährleisten." (Hoffmann 1985: 53)

But journalistic or not, the most important thing for me was that a certain translational purpose could be ascribed to the texts in question. A simple model of the communication situation is illustrated in figure 1:
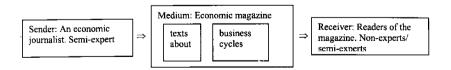

Figure 1: The communication situation

From this model it is clear that in order to determine the whole context of the texts in question we will have to find out what exactly 'business cycles' are. How are they defined? What does the term refer to?

2.2. Definition of 'business cycles'

As I am not an economist myself I will in this part have to rely on standard economic lexicons and books about the theme in Danish and German and see how they define 'business cycles', in German 'Konjunktur' and in Danish 'konjunktur'. But the term seems to be very vague and not very well defined. One of the books describes the vagueness in this way:

> "Konjunktur – ein Name für alles und jedes? In gewisser Weise schon, denn unter Konjunktur versteht man Auf- und Abschwungphasen der Wirtschaft, die sich (mehr oder weniger) regelmässig wiederholen." (Fröhlich/Gertoberens 1994: 70)

Though the linguistic ways of describing business cycles may differ, the definition in for instance *Gablers Wirtschaftslexikon* is very much like the above. *Gablers Wirtschaftslexikon* defines business cycles as:

> "(...) das Zusammenwirken sämtlicher ökonomischer Bewegungsvorgänge zu einer von ihrer Richtung und Intensität bestimmten wirtschaftlichen Gesamtlage." (Gabler 1994: 1870; my emphasis)

As can be seen from the above two definitions the term must be said to have an immense meaning potential if it actually refers to 'all movements'. In *Gabler* the term is further specified as a term being used

> "(...) die Existenz von zyklischen Bewegungen (→ Konjunkturzyklen) anzuzeigen, und die wirtschaftliche Lage eines Sektors oder der gesamten Wirtschaft im Verlauf eines solchen Zyklus zu beschreiben." (ibid.)

Further it is stated that the explanation for such cycles can be found in the different theories of business cycles , which exist, and have existed. From another book concerning such theories it can be concluded that the term 'business cycles' is actually just one way of trying to understand the complexities of the system of our modern market economics (Tvede 1993: 193). One of the first records stemmed from Wesley Mitchell (1913) who during a long period of time noted every detail of economic changes and recorded them thoroughly. He then defined business cycles as:

"(…) en form for udsving i den samlede økonomiske aktivitet i lande, hvor arbejdet hovedsageligt er organiseret gennem private erhvervs-virksomheder: En cyklus består af ekspansioner, der sker på omtrent samme tid indenfor mange økonomiske aktiviteter, fulgt af tilsvarende generelle recessioner, sammentrækninger og genopblomstringer, som fører ind i den næste cyklus' ekspansionsfase." (Burns/Mitchell 1946 cited in: Tvede 1993: 63)

Kondratiev (1935) who formulated the theory of long waves, produced one of the first theoretical formulations of these business cycles. According to Kondratiev the capitalist economy develops in so-called long regular waves (Sundbo 1995: 36). The waves are caused by some permanent evolution factors that will necessarily lead to "ups" and "downs" in the economy (ibid.). Kondratiev's ideas were taken up by a lot of other economists and over time different kinds of waves with different lengths have been discussed (Gabler 1994: 1882). But in fact all the models are just one way of explaining the complexities of the system of economics. Over the years economists have – according to among others Sundbo (Sundbo 1995: 36) – discussed various aspects of the theories. It has for instance been discussed whether the long regular waves really exist and whether they really are caused by certain factors and not just accidental, as used to be the claim before the theory of waves was born. It has also been discussed how the waves could best be described and how long the waves and parts of the waves were (Sundbo 1995: 36). I will not go further into these theoretical economic issues as the main aim of this little discussion of the definition or lack of definition of business cycles was to show how the whole idea of business cycles is actually based upon scientific models of explanation that have been neither verified nor falsified (ibid.; Bjørnland 1998: 18).

By now we can see how the terminology in connection with business cycles can be said to mirror scientific models of explanation, which in their basic substance are metaphorical. This is not very surprising nor even strange, but it makes the determination of context much more complicated than originally expected. If we take the cognitive theory seriously most scientific models will be of a metaphorical nature as we cannot recognise and learn something new without relating it to something already known. As time goes by the models will start to "live their own lives". They will be rearranged, redefined etc. at least at the scientific level. When scientists use their metaphorical models as analogies they are supposedly aware of the fact that they are using a metaphorical

model which has the strength of highlighting some characteristics of the theme but at the same time bears the possibility of hiding other possibly important characteristics (Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 10). Therefore, they can switch models without much effort and use other analogies which are not necessarily consistent with the first model in order to explain other characteristics of the theme in question. But this switching requires fundamental theoretical knowledge. Going back to the communication situation in my articles and to my corpus analysis it cannot be assumed that the reader/the translator and perhaps not even the sender has the necessary knowledge about economics in order to recognise that the terminology of business cycles is based upon scientific models that attempt to explain how economic elements stick together. For a reader lacking this knowledge the resulting concept of economics could be that business cycles are really cyclic movements that cannot be affected. I will return to this aspect later on, but for now I will continue the discussion of context-dependent criteria in relation to my corpus and the above.

Let us now assume that we have defined the context of business cycles according to the above. What would this mean for the translator's identification of linguistic metaphors if he wanted to use context-dependent criteria? First it would mean that at least all the terms somehow defined according to the theory of business cycles and the scientific explanation-models should not be counted as metaphors as they are a part of the ordinary LSP-context. This would apply to terms like for instance '*Konjunkturzyklen'*, '*Konjunkturprogramm',* '*Konjunkturbewegungen'* etc. in German and to terms like '*konjunkturopsving'*, '*konjunkturbevægelser',* '*konjunkturcyklus'* etc. in Danish. Secondly it would mean that considering the rest of the communication situation we would need to operate with a kind of presumed standard-knowledge/standard-vocabulary for the communicative partners, i.e. the sender, the average reader and the translator. Traditionally this standard-vocabulary has been assumed to be the terms listed in the dictionary. In the absence of sufficient and necessary definition criteria empirical researchers have had to resort to dictionaries claiming that metaphors having found their way into the dictionary should no longer be regarded as metaphors as they have become lexicalised and are not interpreted as metaphors involving two different domains of experience but understood directly. At first glance this seems a reasonable solution

from the translational perspective but as we will see it does not make the identification more reliable and this kind of identification is not suited for translation studies. For the translator a definition of metaphors with the above criteria would in the first place mean that the identification would follow from the two most frequently used criteria of definition (see below) and the linguistic expressions found according to this would in the second place be checked according to a dictionary and according to LSP-terminology and excluded as a metaphor if part of one of them. This kind of identifying could as far as I can see it be termed context-dependent criteria-based. Indeed, this was also the way I chose in my first corpus-analysis from which I will now report.

3.   Corpus-analysis number one

The purpose of the analysis was primarily to draw a "metaphor-profile" for the metaphors occurring in the approximately 75 standard pages of articles about business cycles in German and Danish respectively, i.e. half of my corpus. The basic idea of this corpus analysis was that such an analysis could be a small contribution to the translator's knowledge about metaphors in my kind of LSP-texts. Being in the same position as many other researchers before me I had to find some identification-criteria for the linguistic metaphors. At the same time being aware of the fact that a lot of conventional metaphors can be looked up in the dictionary I decided in this first profile only to list the metaphors not fully conventionalised. This was also substantiated by an assumption that the metaphors not so conventionalised would be more difficult to translate and would add more to the text semantically. In other words I decided to use context-dependent criteria for the identification. The investigation was further limited to the open-class forms like verbs, nouns and adjectives. The linguistic metaphors were found through introspection[4] based on the following criteria. In the first place the linguistic expressions which either displayed some kind of 1) semantic anomaly on the sentence level or some kind of 2) absurdity or falsehood were noted. For example (metaphors underlined; WW referring to '*Wirtschaftswoche'* and BN referring to '*Børsens Nyhedsmagasin'):*

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[4]   It is likely that I have missed a number of metaphors. This is however of no importance due to the purpose of the investigation.

*(1)   Norden risikerer at blive revet midt over (BN 1997 no 4 page
59).*

*(2)   Die Exporte bleiben Triebfeder der deutschen Konjunktur (WW
1997 no 4 page 110)*

In example (1), literally 'Scandinavia risks to be torn in two', the se-
mantic anomaly consists of two metaphorical expressions, first Scandi-
navia really cannot risk anything, as it is not a person and secondly
Scandinavia cannot be torn in two, as it is not a thing. In example (2),
literally 'The exports remain the incentive of the German business cy-
cles', the semantic anomaly consists of an absurd and false predication:
an incentive is not the same as exports. These two criteria from the
structuralist view of metaphor are as we know not sufficient but often
necessary. A negation of example (2) would mean that the example
could not be listed as a metaphor if we used clear-cut criteria as for
instance falsehood of the utterance. But with less rigid criteria example
(2) could in the least be said to be absurd. The above-mentioned two
more cotext-oriented criteria were afterwards combined with a third
more context-oriented criteria, i.e. 3) the metaphors were checked in the
two most used bilingual dictionaries, *Munksgaard's 'Dansk-Tysk ord-
bog'*, Danish-German dictionary, and *Gyldendal's 'Tysk-Dansk ord-
bog'*, German-Danish dictionary[5] and metaphors listed in one of them
with the relevant meaning were disregarded. The same applies for simi-
les whereas idioms and metonymies were included if they were not
listed in the dictionaries with the relevant meaning. Finally, metaphors,
which were assumed to be part of the LSP-terminology of business
cycles, were to a great extent also disregarded. The identification of lin-
guistic metaphors using such criteria may of course be dependent on the
researcher but this is of no relevance here as the purpose of this first
corpus-analysis was to draw an approximate profile of the metaphors in
the texts in question and not to make an exhaustive investigation of all
the linguistic metaphors in the texts. The hypothesis of my investiga-
tion was based on the intuition that German articles would contain more
metaphors than Danish ones. On the other hand my hypothesis was that
the semantic domains from which the metaphors were drawn would be

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[5]   The reason for this choice was the aim of my Ph.D.-thesis: to test the metaphor-com-
petence of semi-professionals. In this article it is of no relevance and the choice could
of course be debated.

rather similar in the two languages due to the fact that Denmark and Germany have comparable economic systems and that they both have terms describing different aspects of business cycles like *'konjunktur-opsving'* and *'Konjunkturaufschwung'*. At the same time it was hoped that some differences would appear in the categorisation, which could be of help for the translator's decision-making and ultimately for his macro-strategy. Before drawing this "metaphor-profile" for the texts about business cycles a further discussion of the problem of categorising is needed.

3.1. The problem of categorising

There are several ways of categorising metaphors. Most frequently metaphors have been categorised according to their use and acceptability and there seems to be agreement about the fact that every metaphor can be placed somewhere in-between the two poles of "dead" and "live" (Black 1993: 25). The scales have varied from these two levels to ones consisting of up to six levels (Newmark 1995: 106-113). As this kind of categorisation is only valid at a given time for a given person in a given context and as it is known that metaphors can have varying levels of acceptability in different languages, I decided not to use this categorisation-model in the first place. Implicitly it is however used when disregarding the metaphors listed in the dictionary and the metaphors belonging to LSP-terminology of business cycles.

Another way of categorising could be the potential of the metaphor as a model for the formation of more metaphors, i.e. if the metaphor is active or not. Some metaphors seem in this respect to have more potential and consequently be more used as models than others but researchers have not come up with any criteria whatsoever as to how the translator can determine whether a metaphor could form a foundation for more metaphors or not.[6] I will therefore also have to leave this model.

My categorisations in this first corpus-analysis are based on a third well-known way of categorising, namely the categorisation-model built on semasiologic criteria according to which the metaphors are categorised in semantic domains of experience. The categories could be said

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6 The investigations of Clausner and Croft do however seem promising (Clausner/ Croft 1997).

to be determined by my corpus. I deliberately use the formulation 'could be said' because it cannot be denied that like any categorisation, this one will mirror the researcher's way of categorising and conceptualising the world. Neither can it be denied that the number of categories and their ontology is an intriguing problem, but a discussion of this will have to wait for another article. Another person could therefore of course rearrange my categories. In this first analysis my categories were based on a phenomenological assumption that we as human beings have three great domains of experience at our disposal when we conceptualise: the physical, the social and the mental domain (see for instance Brandt 1993) and further on the assumption that metaphorisation in general goes from the physical to the social and finally to the mental domain (Brandt 1993). But such a categorisation is far too broad to be of significance. The domains therefore have to be more differentiated. Thus, according to the empirical material the domain of the physical world was divided into two subdomains, metaphors coming from the domain of nature and metaphors coming from the domain of physics/mechanics/technology. It should be noted that the metaphors from the domain of mechanics seem to form a group of their own. Here, however, these were grouped together because it often is debatable whether something belongs to the domain of mechanics or to the domain of physics. To what domain does for instance '*pressure*', in German '*Druck*' and in Danish '*pres*', belong? The domain of the social world was divided into three subdomains, a war-related domain, a domain of sports/games and a domain of social relations. In the middle of these two large domains the metaphors that could be termed as personifications are placed.

3.2. Results of corpus-analysis number one

The result of my analysis was that both hypotheses seem to be right. The German articles contained more metaphors than the Danish ones, 303 types compared to 203, and the categories were very alike. The result of the categorisation can be seen from figure 2:
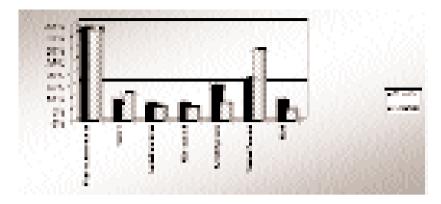
Figure 2: Metaphors in German and Danish articles about business cycles

As can be seen from the above the metaphor-profiles of the texts resemble each other. Actually no important differences could be established in the comparison between Danish and German. The two most interesting conclusions to be drawn from the data were that the area of sports/games was more frequent in Danish texts than in German texts, which could be explained by cultural differences. Further, the German texts contained personifications more often than the Danish ones. Although the categories are slightly different other work seems to have drawn similar conclusions (Stålhammer 1997; Stegu 1996; Schmitt 1988; Svensson 1980). But seen through the translator's eyes the value of such a corpus-analysis is relatively small. Of course the translator has gained the insight that the languages with respect to their use of metaphors in these LSP-texts seem to be rather similar. This knowledge can of course be of use in his macro-strategy, but confronted with a specific metaphor in the source-text he still cannot assume that without further ado the metaphor can be translated into a similar metaphor in a target-text.

But as far as I can see the fundamental problem with such a categorisation is the question whether the predication of business cycles and the domains of the metaphors can be said to be of validity at all. Weinrich noted this important aspect already in 1976 (Weinrich 1976: 284), namely that a categorisation of metaphors in domains would only be of interest if the metaphors were seen together with the phenomenon they

were supposed to describe. The analysis suggests that such a predication between for instance the domain of nature and business cycles is valid, but perhaps this is arguable when we take the huge meaning potential of the term 'konjunktur' respectively 'Konjunktur' as described in section 2.2 into account. In fact, when we take a closer look at the themes described with all sorts of metaphors from almost all sorts of domains the predication seems rather problematic.

Another essential problem with the above analysis is that it relies too heavily on the researcher and on dictionaries. Exactly how many metaphors can be identified in a sentence like

> *(3)   Den vækstklemme, som Sydafrika er på vej ind i, er en bombe*
> *under de politiske reformer (BN 1997 no 3 page 62).*

Literally 'the growth-squeeze, which South Africa is entering, is a bomb under the political reforms'? If we analyse the sentence according to our above-mentioned criteria the term 'South Africa' would in the end be the only term to be identified as a "non-metaphor" and we could start to discuss the status of the rest of the sentence. Even if we identified for instance 'growth-squeeze' as a metaphor we could argue that somehow the term 'growth' alone also was a metaphor, though probably belonging to the LSP-terminology. Undoubtedly the analyst will recognize what Bühler accepted years ago:

> "Wer die sprachliche Erscheinung, die man Metapher zu nennen pflegt, einmal anfängt zu beachten, dem erscheint die menschliche Rede bald ebenso aufgebaut aus Metaphern, wie der Schwarzwald aus Bäumen." (Bühler 1934/1982: 342)

All this means that the allocation of a metaphor is very dependent on the experience and interpretations of the researcher. Is a Danish metaphor like '*udløse*', literally 'release', in the sentence

> *(4)   Mindre privat opsparing kan udløse regeringsindgreb (BN 1997*
> *no 1 page 62).*

to be categorised as a personification, a war-related metaphor or a metaphor belonging to the domain of mechanics? On the other hand, by relying on context-dependent criteria and thereby dictionaries it also means that the final metaphor-list might not always correspond to the researcher's intuition. I would like to illustrate this with two examples:

> *(5)   (…) men tildelingen af (…) kan have banet vejen for accept af*
> *den nye mastodont (BN 1997 no 1 page 64).*

> (6)   *Das Konjunkturbarometer (…) fiel um anderthalb Punkte (WW*
>   *1997 no 23 page 165).*

In the first example '*mastodont*', literally 'mastodon', will be listed as a metaphor belonging to the domain of nature because of the fact that it is listed in the bilingual dictionary like this: mastodont (zoo) 'Mastodon n –es'. But this seems to be an etymological view rather than a synchronic one. For the average reader '*mastodont*' is a very common expression for a great and dominant company and the interpretation of '*mastodont*' would probably be immediate and not involve knowledge about giant extinct elephants. On the other hand the metaphor '*Konjunkturbarometer*' would not be counted as a metaphor being part of the LSP-terminology and also listed in the dictionary. But for the translator with a presumed lack of LSP-knowledge the interpretation of '*Konjunkturbarometer*' will definitely be metaphorical, i.e. the interpretation would involve knowledge about barometers and their function and connotations. The problem here is the problem described by Steen (Steen 1994: 49) among others, namely that metaphor interpretation need not be metaphorical interpretation. Interpretation of metaphors is closely connected to each individual's knowledge. In the above-mentioned examples a keeper in the zoo would probably interpret '*mastodont*' metaphorically whereas a reader without 'elephant-knowledge' would interpret it directly. An economist would also interpret '*Konjunkturbarometer*' directly while an average Danish reader would possibly interpret it indirectly, i.e. metaphorically. Context-dependent criteria cannot help us here as long as we have to consult the dictionaries in order to determine if an expression is common or not, i.e. if the metaphor ultimately should be counted as a metaphor or not.

The above-mentioned problems with respect to the analysis lead me to another very fundamental problem seen through the translator's eyes. The analysis is not specific enough to ascribe a certain function to the metaphors. This point was touched upon earlier when it was stated that one of the most important competences for the translator with regard to metaphors is to be able to ascribe a certain textual and cognitive function and potential effect to the metaphors. But if the predication between the metaphors and the theme in question is not valid, the whole analysis will fall apart. Consequently, the only thing we can say about the functions and potential effects of the metaphors is what we already know, namely that abstract concepts are to a certain extent described by

more concrete domains of experience and that this may lead to a (better?) understanding and conceptualisation of the phenomenon. From my point of view it is therefore necessary to attack the problem from a different angle. A proposal for doing this will be described in the next section.

4. Corpus analysis number two

The analysis used in this section could be described as a bottom-up approach. Instead of drawing a global profile of linguistic metaphors in the given context, I find the analysis needs to be more specific and detailed in order to provide the translator with usable knowledge. The translator must possess specific knowledge about the ways certain aspects of the theme in question, i.e. business cycles, are described and conceptualised. One of the ways to achieve this would be to define different aspects of the global theme 'business cycles' and to analyse how these aspects were described. But then again we are faced with the imprecise definition of 'business cycles' (see section 2.2). Therefore, I see no other way out of this trap than by locating certain linguistic terms, which by definition belong to the theme. This may seem to be old-fashioned but can in fact be legitimised by the previous mentioned lack of concreteness of business cycles. As business cycles are an abstraction in themselves it could be argued as mentioned before that the terms being used to describe the phenomenon would be metaphors par excellence. A collection of the linguistic expressions connected with 'business cycles' could then provide us with important knowledge about how we specifically conceptualise or how we indirectly are told to conceptualise something like business cycles. My first choice for such an analysis fell on the very term for 'business cycles' in German and Danish, 'Konjunktur' respectively 'konjunktur'. The analysis was conducted in the following way: All occurrences of the terms were collected this time from the entire corpus consisting of one volume each of the two previously mentioned magazines, both containing about 145 standard pages. The hypothesis of this study was similar to that of the first one that the domains of experience used to concretise the abstract domain of business cycles in German and Danish would be relatively similar due to similar economic systems but that small differences might appear mostly due to cultural differences. It was predicted that German and Danish would use the term in similar ways. At the same

time it was naturally also hoped that a more specific analysis would make the estimation of functions and potential effects easier. The result was astonishing as can be seen in the next part.

4.1. Result of corpus-analysis number two

The Danish articles contained only 11 examples of the term 'konjunktur' whereas the German ones contained 84, i.e. more than seven times as many metaphors. Though the economic systems of Germany and Denmark are very much alike and though the abstraction 'konjunktur' exists in both countries there seems to be very important differences in their use. As in the previous analysis I then tried to find the underlying predication of the examples, i.e. to determine with what basic idea/ understanding of the phenomenon the linguistic expressions could provide readers. In this analysis I abandoned the phenomenological categories from the first corpus-analysis hoping that the terms would have something in common that was not determined by pre-established categories. This gave the following result: The 11 Danish examples could be divided into three groups, one group of nature with only one example and the rest in a group where the underlying idea was that the abstraction of business cycles is concretised as an object, not a specific object but simply an object. This second group could actually be divided into two groups, one where the object is movable or moving by itself and one where the object can be observed and measured.[7] The German examples are of course much more differentiated due to the greater number of examples (see also below). A comparison of the categories in connection with the term 'konjunktur' can be seen from figure 3:

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[7] Perhaps this distinction even could be said to be the distinction between 'static' and 'dynamic'.
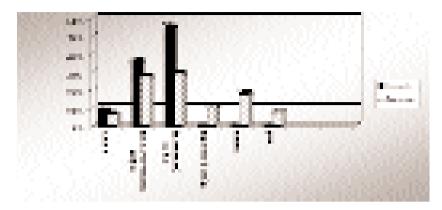
Figure 3: Expressions with 'konjunktur' respectively 'Konjunktur'.

The previously mentioned problems of categorising were of course similar to the problems of the first analysis. But the bottom-up approach has several advantages in comparison to a top-down one. First of all we get all the linguistic expressions connected with the term 'konjunktur'. Instead of searching for semantic anomalies and absurdities to define a metaphor and thereby disregarding terms from the very beginning we get a differentiated idea of how 'konjunktur' is linguistically described in the two languages. Secondly, there can be no question about the predication between the theme and the linguistic expressions. Thirdly, we escape – at least at first – the problem experienced by every metaphor-researcher, i.e. the drawing of limits between metaphors and non-metaphors that I have discussed in section 3.2. After this first collection of all linguistic expressions a further analysis could be conducted for instance according to the degree of metaphoricity, the types of metaphors, subdomains, linguistic manifestation (verbs, nouns etc.) or according to LSP-terminology. This would of course require a larger corpus, but even in my small corpus it is obvious that for instance the category termed 'an object that is movable or moving by itself' could be subdivided into these two features. Another possibility for a further analysis of my corpus seems to be a differentiation of the specific objects moving the 'konjunktur'. This would be of great importance for the translator. Seen from his perspective it does matter if the object is a locomotive or a roller-coaster. Though perhaps providing the reader with the same overall idea of 'konjunktur' the very linguistic expressions can vary

and this variation will very often by determined by small cultural differences.

The fundamental questions for the translator of the functions of the metaphors and their potential effect can now be answered more easily. From the linguistic material we could ask: If the phenomenon of business cycles is described with linguistic expressions from the domain of nature etc. what could this then mean for the average reader's potential understanding and conceptualisation of business cycles, assuming of course that he is not familiar with theories of business cycles? What predications would the average reader assume to be the right ones? The categories actually seem to have something in common.

The expressions used in the German articles about business cycles seem to imply predications like the following: Business cycles are nature – leading to conclusions like business cycles can sometimes be predicted in the same way as you can predict the behaviour of nature but our possibilities of influencing them are minor. This idea manifests itself in linguistic expressions such as for instance '*Konjunkturaufhellung'* literally 'clearing up of the business cycles', '*Konjunkturbarometer'* literally 'barometer of business cycles' etc. Closely connected hereto is the predication between business cycles and an object being able to move by its own force, or even of a person by its own free will and force. This predication can be seen in linguistic expressions like *'die Konjunktur komme nur mühsam voran'* literally 'the business cycles move only slowly forward' or 'd*ie Konjunktur springt an'* literally 'the business cycle starts running' etc. Another predication would be that business cycles are an object to be measured and observed – leading to similar conclusions and expressions and seen in expressions like '*Konjunkturbeobachter'* literally 'watchers of the business cycles' or '*Konjunkturdaten'* literally 'data of the business cycles'. Business cycles are also conceptualised as an unstable object that really cannot exist without some kind of support, seen in expression like *'die Konjunktur stützen'* literally 'to support the business cycles'. The support can manifest itself in another object that can move the object away when needed, seen in expressions such as *'Triebfeder der Konjunktur'* literally 'incentive of the business cycles' or *'Motor der Konjunktur'* literally 'motor of the business cycles' or even *'Konjunkturlokomotive'* literally 'locomotive of the business cycles' etc. All these observations could lead the average reader to an understanding of business cycles not

only as a concrete object but also as an object or phenomenon with certain built-in regularities and irregularities, an object that is beyond human influence.

It is now appropriate to ask whether the translator can use this knowledge, either in order to make a macro-strategy for translating metaphors or in order to find some solutions to translation problems with respect to metaphors in this kind of texts. I believe that he can, but I can of course only show this in an exemplary manner. But first of all the translator would now know that although the concepts of business cycles look similar on the surface in the two countries, Germans obviously have a much more differentiated way of describing the phenomenon directly than Danes have. He would know that although the linguistic expressions come from different domains they could be said to have the same implications for our understanding of the phenomenon. He would be able to see, that the metaphors seem to stick together, all providing the average reader with a certain view of business cycles. Translating from German into Danish he would know that he had to be careful when translating texts where business cycles are mentioned. When confronted with for instance the personification in a sentence like:

>   *(7)   Die deutsche Konjunktur komme "nur mühsam voran" (WW 1997 no 12 page 218).*

the translator would think twice before translating the sentence directly into the of course possible but in fact rather uncommon Danish sentence: *'Konjunkturen kommer kun med besvær fremad' consequently loaded with much more metaphoricity. By now he would be in a position to evaluate the status of the German metaphor and compare this with his knowledge of similar Danish texts. Not only would he be in a position to evaluate a direct translation as unfamiliar in Danish but also to see that the description of business cycles in this one example is very much in line with one of the common ways of describing business cycles in German, namely as an object (in fact here a person) moving with some difficulty. However, until now the analysis has not provided him with information that could be of help in his search for other solutions than the direct translation. Intuitively he would probably search for words with approximately the same meaning potential as business cycles. One of the words he might think of could be the notion of economics, in German 'Wirtschaft' and in Danish 'økonomi'. But before substituting business cycles with economics he would need to know, how

economics is conceptualised in German and Danish. An analysis of the terms conducted in the same manner as the previous shows in figure 4 the following distribution that could legitimise a substitution of 'Konjunktur' in German with 'økonomien' in the Danish translation, i.e. 'Økonomien kommer kun med besvær fremad'.
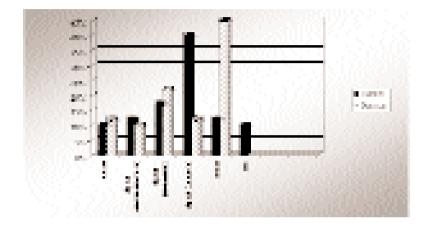

Figure 4: Expressions with 'Wirtschaft' respectively 'økonomi'.

5.   Conclusion

I have reported my results from two corpus-analyses, which I conducted as a part of my Ph.D.-thesis. The aim was to show why I believe we have to approach the empirical investigation of metaphors with a bottom-up approach when as researchers we want to provide the translator with metaphor-competence with respect to knowledge about what metaphors can be found in certain kinds of LSP-texts. Taking linguistic expressions as our starting-point we do not of course solve the problem of distinguishing metaphors from non-metaphors and grouping them in different degrees of metaphoricity or something else. But we do get a much broader idea of how different abstract concepts, in this case the concept of business cycles, are linguistically described. This knowledge is of major importance for the translator especially when he is translating LSP-texts where he is not an expert himself. The translator operates on the linguistic surface and of course the realisation of more

basic conceptual metaphors such as Lakoff and others' A IS B basic level concepts (for instance 'ACTIVITY IS MOTION', Lakoff 1987) is important. But to the translator the question of the exact linguistic manifestation and its potential function and effect is the most important thing. Every time he has to translate a text he has to ask himself: "What kinds of metaphors are normally used in this kind of text to achieve what meaning?" "What underlying predications do these linguistic expressions imply?" "Are there differences between language A and B in that respect?"

The answer of such questions would be facilitated by the mode of investigation that I have applied here and the translator's metaphor-competence would increase substantially when he knows the answer to such questions. He will in other words know why and how metaphor matters in "his" metaphor matters.

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